



The League of Women Voters of Scarsdale (LWVS) is a volunteer nonpartisan political organization which promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is nonpartisan in that it does not support or oppose any candidate for public office; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues after serious member study and consensus.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SCARSDALE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January/February 2008

January

Monday	14	9:00AM	Board Meeting	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor
Friday	25	9:00AM	General Membership Mtg: School Election System	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor

February

Saturday	2	5-7PM	Winter Fund Raiser	Starr home 65 Church Lane
Monday	4	9:00AM	Board Meeting	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor
		10:30AM	General Membership Mtg: Local & County Program	
Wednesday	13	9:30AM	Breakfast w/County Executive	White Plains Library
Friday	25	9:00AM	General Membership Mtg: School Elec System	

March

Monday	3	9:00AM	Board Meeting	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor
Monday	17	9:00AM	Board Meeting	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor
		10:15AM	General Membership Mtg: School Budget	
Friday	28	9:00AM	Board Meeting	Village Hall, 3 rd Floor
		10:15AM	General Membership Mtg: Village Budget	

Remember to Vote

2008 Elections of
 Scarsdale School Board
 Nominating Committee
 which nominates candidates for the
 Scarsdale Board of Education will be
 held on:

Tuesday, January 8th

Polls are open at the Scarsdale
 Middle School
 7:00 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.
 &
 2:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Remember to Vote

2008 Presidential Primary
Tuesday, February 5th
 Vote at the school in your
 Elementary District
 6 A.M. - 9 P.M.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Happy New Year to you and your families! It would not be possible to accomplish all that we have thus far, or have planned for the rest of the year without such a hard working, dedicated Board or without the support of members. Thank you all so very much.

Please take a few minutes to review the calendar on the cover of this Bulletin for upcoming meetings and events:

- a General Membership Meeting to evaluate the School Board Election System will take place on Friday, January 25th, at 9 AM at Village Hall in the third floor meeting room. We welcome and need your input.
- our local and county program planning membership meeting is Monday, February 4th at 10:30 at Village Hall in the third floor meeting room. This is an opportunity for you to identify potential areas of study for the League. If you are unable to attend this meeting and would like to suggest an area for study, please contact me.
- our winter fundraiser will be held on Feb 2nd at the home of Janice and Ira Starr. It's always a festive and fun event and I hope you will be able to attend. Additional information about this event appears on p. 6.

Wishing you a great 2008,

Adie Shore

P.S. Please help me communicate with you in a timely manner. Please register your email with us at lwvs.org. Click on Email Registration on the left of the screen.

P.S.S. If your name, on the back cover, has an asterisk next to it, it means you haven't paid your 2007-08 membership dues. We count on your support.

Great Books Mentioning the League (from LWVUS)

Several recent books highlight the contributions of League members around the country! They are : *Soul of a Citizen* by Paul Loeb; *Getting a Grip* by Frances Moore Lappe and *The Next Form of Democracy* by Matt Leighninger.

LWVS Dues

Our thanks to those members who paid their dues for 2007-08. Members who haven't paid will see as asterisk (*) next to their name on the back cover. Dues may be paid by sending a check to:

LWVS

Individual: \$55

P.O. Box 495

Household: \$75

Scarsdale, NY 10583

For question, please call:

Kitt Rosenthal

723-5126

Membership forms are available on the website. Dues must be paid in order to continue receiving the Bulletin.

From the League of Women Voters of New York State

Project Sunlight

The unveiling presentation given on Project Sunlight December 5th by Blair Horner of the Attorney General's (AG's) office was an exciting beginning to more transparency in state government.

The webpage is www.sunlightny.com Please browse the website and submit any questions or comments you may have to the AG's office by clicking on the Contact Us button in the top right hand corner of the page. The AG is especially interested in League input as we are a prime target audience for this website. This website will be extremely useful to high school Participation in Government Programs, your local Community Colleges or SUNY systems, your coalition members in other advocacy issues and anyone else interested in open government. This website is for the novice and the expert alike. It is designed to receive your thoughts and comments. It is the plan of the AG's office to incorporate your ideas to further strengthen the website by the end of the calendar year.

The League was there at the inception of this idea and it was exciting to see the culmination of the hard work done by our colleague Blair Horner.

School Board to Host Community Budget Discussions

The Scarsdale Board of Education invites Scarsdale residents to help shape our children's education by participating in the budget-planning process for the 2008-2009 school year. We encourage you to join us in conversations about financial and program projections and the decisions we face. Share your views with the Board about student needs, possible program initiatives, and how we might best balance sustaining the excellence of our schools with budget pressures and the challenge of controlling tax growth. Interested community members are invited to sign up for one of two meetings scheduled for January 2008:

Tuesday, January 14th, from 7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.
(in Room 170-172, Scarsdale High School, Brewster Road side)

Thursday, January 17th, from 10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon
(at the Girl Scout House on Wayside Lane)

*Note: Snow date for Budget Forums is Tuesday, January 22nd
10:00 a.m. meeting at the Girl Scout House on Wayside Lane*

or

7:30 p.m. meeting in Room 170-172, Scarsdale High School, Brewster Road side

Meetings will be open to the public, although advance registration is requested. Please RSVP to the District office (721-2410 or Irehm@scarsdaleschools.k12.ny.us). If you cannot attend either session, the Board will welcome your comments at a regular Board meeting, in writing to 2 Brewster Road, or to BoardofEd@scarsdaleschools.org. Let us hear from you!

LWVUS Convention in Portland in June

Join League members from all across the US for Convention 2008

Mark your calendar for *Reaching New Heights Together*, the LWVUS Convention at the Hilton, Portland in Portland Oregon on June 13-17, 2008. As the theme suggests, the convention will provide the forum for debate and consensus on the League initiatives for the next two years. Look for details in subsequent Bulletins.

December 10, 2007

**SCARSDALE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
STATEMENT ON THE 2007 ELECTION FOR THE CITIZENS NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The League of Women Voters of Scarsdale (the "League"), itself a nonpartisan organization, favors the concept of, and recognizes the value of a nonpartisan system for the selection of Village and School Board candidates in Scarsdale. We continue to monitor these election systems to encourage the informed and active participation of our citizens. We have the following comments and recommendations regarding the 2007 Committee election:

Overview. The League recognizes the continued efforts by the Procedure Committee to administer the election of members to the Committee and its commitment to the effective functioning of Scarsdale's nonpartisan system. In furtherance of Scarsdale's unique system of government, the League believes it is critical that the Procedure Committee actively pursue ways in which citizens are encouraged to participate in the process by (i) better educating the community about the nonpartisan system, and (ii) improving voter turnout by facilitating voting by citizens.

The Vote.

Voter Turnout. The turnout of 450 voters was a decrease in voter participation from 2006 but fell within the expected range of votes cast over the past ten years. Since 1997, the tally of votes cast has fluctuated from a low of 297 voters in 1997 to last year's peak of 624 voters. As voter turnout generally represents less than 5% of resident voters of Scarsdale, the League suggests the Procedure Committee continue to focus its efforts on increasing voter participation. The League commends the Procedure Committee for reaching out to various community organizations, including the neighborhood associations, to attract candidates and to raise awareness of the election. The League again recommends that the Procedure Committee send a representative to the first Parent Teacher Association meeting of each of the elementary schools to describe the nonpartisan system and to generate interest in the election. The League believes that personal outreach to the newer residents of the community will result in a more informed and interested voter base.

The League applauds the Procedure Committee for developing a new website and recognizes its enormous potential for improving voter education and participation. To bolster the reach and active use of the website, the Procedure Committee should explore the feasibility of placing a link on www.scarsdale.com. In addition, the Procedure Committee should examine how to increase hits from online search engines as it has been difficult to locate the website without knowing the precise web address.

Voting. The League believes that making voting more convenient for residents would greatly increase voter participation. To this end, the League encourages the Procedure Committee to explore (i) online voting, (ii) a broadened use of the absentee ballot, (iii) a streamlined absentee ballot process, and (iv) an extension of voting hours.

The League reiterates its previous suggestion that the Procedure Committee investigate online voting as an additional means of voting, noting that citizens have grown increasingly comfortable with electronic communications.

The League commends the Procedure Committee for the year over year increase in use of the absentee ballot from four to nine individuals, noting that a majority of the applications for absentee ballots came from the newly launched Procedure Committee website. The League believes the absentee ballot has enormous untapped potential as an acceptable alternative to in-person voting and recommends the Procedure Committee explore repositioning the absentee ballot as a convenience ballot. If communicated appropriately, the League believes resident voters will become accustomed to requesting absentee ballots even if they are present in Scarsdale on election day.

Given the opportunity to broaden the usage of the absentee ballot, the League recommends that the Procedure Committee look to streamlining the absentee ballot process. The window for voting as an absentee is still quite narrow, and a one step process might garner more votes.

Improving voter convenience requires a multi-pronged strategy. In addition to the recommendations for alternative voting channels, the League continues to encourage the Procedure Committee to extend in-person voting hours. The hours of operation seem to be based on past practice, when the election was conducted at the Scarsdale Middle School. Now that the election is conducted at Village Hall, the Procedure Committee has the opportunity to keep the polls open throughout the day. While the League recognizes the difficulty in securing volunteers to staff the polling place, the League believes uninterrupted hours of operation may increase voter turnout. As a first step, the League suggests the Procedure Committee reexamine hours of operation to ensure they reflect the needs of the different demographics of the voting population. In particular, the Procedure Committee might consider lengthening the morning hours to accommodate voters with young children, and, if need be, shortening the mid afternoon hours.

The Ballot. The League commends the Procedure Committee for providing voters with a clear and easy to understand ballot.

* * * * *

Polling Location, Choice of Day, and Parking. The League continues to believe that the current polling location at Village Hall is an appropriate venue for the election and applauds the Procedure Committee for changing the election day to a Tuesday. Parking no longer seemed to pose problems for voters as there were ample spaces throughout the day. The League encourages the Procedure Committee to continue to conduct the election on a Tuesday.

Finances. While the League recognizes that precise figures regarding expenses and donations associated with the election will not be available until the Town and Village Civic Club Education Forum releases its budget report in 2008, the League understands that expenses associated with the election, currently estimated at \$4300, may be in excess of community contributions. As it has in the past, the League reaffirms its belief that the public be responsible for the expenses of the administration of the nonpartisan system. The League commends the Procedure Committee for supplementing the general mailing with a targeted approach to community groups such as neighborhood associations to encourage contribution. The League would appreciate receiving a copy of the Procedure Committee's financial report for this election year at your earliest convenience.

Publicity. The League commends the Procedure Committee for making available to the public information regarding: efforts to attract candidates for the Committee; the proposed candidates; the date, polling time and place for the election; and the procedure for obtaining absentee ballots. The results of the election were also published. It is noted that the coverage appeared in various media, including the Scarsdale Inquirer and on the Procedure Committee website. The League also appreciated that the Procedure Committee garnered the support of local organizations to raise awareness through an active use of email. Signage also helped remind voters to participate.

Notice to Vote Brochure. The League found the Notice to Vote brochure informative and timely. The League did not note any negative consequences of moving the mailing to an earlier delivery date. However, the League urges the Procedure Committee to change the language describing absentee ballots on the back page of the Notice to Vote brochure. Voters received the brochure after the absentee ballot due date and might have been confused by the deadline. If the Procedure Committee devises a method to shorten the absentee ballot process, voters may have a chance to seek an absentee ballot once they receive the Notice to Vote brochure. The Procedure Committee might consider directing voters to the website to expedite the absentee ballot process.

Number of Candidates per Vacancy. It is important to note that the Procedure Committee, in compliance with the Non-Partisan Resolution, provided at least two candidates for each open position for each district. Given the structure of our nonpartisan system, the importance of the election of Committee members cannot be overemphasized as the Committee's nominations of Mayor and Trustees are most often tantamount to election. The League recognizes that the Procedure Committee expends enormous energies to present voters with a choice for each vacancy and appreciates the Procedure Committee's commitment to a contested election.

The League appreciates the continued efforts of the Procedure Committee to administer the Committee election and lauds its dedication to the nonpartisan system. The League believes there is still ample opportunity to improve the election process by harnessing technology to engage a larger portion of the resident voters. The League encourages the Procedure Committee to remain committed to the continuous improvement of the Village election system and to an amplified campaign to build awareness among Scarsdale residents. Overall, the League congratulates the Committee on a successful election.

Jane Veron
Chair, Village Election Systems

Adie Shore
President

Scarsdale League of Women Voters

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will meet soon to select the 2008-2009 slate of Officers and Directors. League members are urged to contact any of the Committee members with suggestions and comments.

Mary Beth Gose, Chair	722-2403	megose@att.com
Jackie Irwin	472-2311	jirwin7464@aol.com
Terry Singer	723-1591	Terrysing14@aol.com
Janice Starr	472-8851	IraJanice@aol.com
Florie Wachtenheim	472-3829	Floriewa@optonline.net

Welcome New Members:

Lisa Copeland
Melpo Fite
Pamela Rubin

Transferring Member:

Edith Segall

**The League of Women
Voter's of Scarsdale
Cordially invites you to a
Winter Cocktail Fund and
Friend Raiser**

**Saturday, February 2nd
5:00 - 7:00 PM
At the home of Janice and
Ira Starr
65 Church Lane**

**\$25 per person
Payable to LWVS**

**Please RSVP to Melpo Fite
44 Taunton Road
melpovf@gmail.com
Any questions, please call
Adie Shore at 472-5175**

Kudos Korner

Penny Bauersfeld for keeping our website up to date.

Michelle Lichtenberg for spearheading our annual Finance Drive

Nancy Michaels for creating this Bulletin.

PamMeisel for having the League Banner hung in Chase Park on Election Day.

Jane Veron for facilitating the League Village Election System consensus meeting and for preparing the League's statement.

Congratulations to Members!!

Anne Lyons on being honored as distinguished alumnus by the Scarsdale Alumni Association on December 1st.

Florie Wachtenheim on receiving the 2007 Visions of Community Award, presented by the Scarsdale Teen Center on December 2nd.

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON THE
SCHOOL BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25TH AT 9:00 AM

Scarsdale Village Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room

Rick Wingate, the chair of the SBNC Administrative Committee, will be there to answer any questions that you may have concerning the elections

We need your feedback in order to evaluate the School Board Nominating Committee election process

For more information, contact Anne Lyons at 725-9810

KALYONSKJP@aol.com

**LWW STATEMENT AT WESTCHESTER COUNTY BOARD OF LEGISLATORS' PUBLIC HEARING ON THE
PROPOSED 2008 COUNTY BUDGET,
DECEMBER 10th, 2007, TIME, MICHELIAN OFFICE BUILDING**

The League of Women Voters of Westchester thanks the Board of Legislators for this opportunity to present its view on the proposed budget. We believe that the County budget must reflect the priorities of the citizens and taxpayers for services provided by the county government. In this context, we offer the following comments and suggestions.

Board of Legislators ("BOL") Budget: The League is still concerned about the fact that, unlike other departments, the Board of Legislators does not list its personnel and salaries in the operating budget. By way of comparison, the budgeted amount for the BOL (\$4.6 million before fringe benefits) is \$1.0 million greater than the amount expended in 2006 (\$3.6 million). Although the BOL represents a tiny fraction of the budget, the lack of information provided in the BOL's section of the budget (e.g., no mission statement, number of personnel positions, salaries, etc.) raises questions about its willingness to be accountable to the tax-paying residents of Westchester. Although some members of the BOL have indicated that they plan to scrutinize the budgets of other County departments, which includes staffing, they have not indicated that they will apply the same level of analysis to their own departmental budget, despite the recent significant increases. This oversight must be corrected in the 2008 and future budgets.

HAVA ("Help America Vote Act"): Based on extensive research by the LWVNYS and LWWV, the League's position is that precinct-based optical scan machines with a verifiable paper trail are the most reliable and cost-effective voting machines available. The League's study concludes that these are the least expensive machines to buy, store and maintain. It is therefore essential that the Board of Legislators keep monitoring this item closely as it appears in both the capital and operating budgets over which the BOL has control. We expect there will be major increases in expenses in both the capital and operating budgets required by HAVA legislation. In addition, we expect voter training to be a major issue, and the League, with its long record of service to voters, looks forward to assisting in this area.

Duplication of Services: To contain costs, we urge the BOL and the administration to institute major in-depth studies of administration and departmental costs to determine actual needs and duplication of services.

MTA (Metropolitan Transit Authority): The County gives the MTA approximately \$146 million from both the capital and operating budgets through such areas as a portion of the sales and mortgage taxes, with no accountability to the County. The Board of Legislators and the Administration must insist on periodic, audited reports detailing where the money is being spent.

Medical Center: The League believes that the continuing mission of the Medical Center is to serve as the regional tertiary care and trauma center. Since the Medical Center serves six neighboring counties, we urge that there should be continued lobbying at the state level for assistance from these counties, and the League would be willing to help in such lobbying efforts.

Taxes: The League is very concerned about the continual peaks and valleys in property tax levies. The League believes that such fluctuations are not fiscally prudent and a policy to address this issue should be developed by both the Board of Legislators and the Administration in future budgets.

Reassessment ("Reval"): While the proposed increase in the county tax levy is 4.74%, there are municipalities that will sustain a hefty rise due to the application of the equalization formula necessitated by the inconsistencies in current assessments. As we have stated in the past, countywide property reassessment is essential, and the administration and Board of Legislators should immediately move forward to implement it.

Department of Corrections: The League is very concerned about the significant proposed increase of \$9.7 million over last year's budgeted amount of \$110.4 million to \$120.1 million for this department. We suggest that this budget be re-examined for cost savings.

Day Care: The League supports the proposed increase of 298 slots in the number of low-income day care slots that are available, which raises the total to 2,039 slots. We also are in favor of lowering the day care co-payments from 15% to 10%.

Pesticide Control: To ensure full implementation of and compliance with the Pesticide Reduction Law, again the League strongly urges inclusion of funding for a full-time professional Pest Management Coordinator in the Department of Health.

Budget Process: The Board of Legislators must vigorously petition the County Executive to release the budget at an earlier date. The current schedule allows no time for analysis and study of this very complex and complicated document. As we have said for more than twenty years, this is a disservice to the public as well as to the Board of Legislators itself.

The League of Women Voters of Westchester thanks Deputy Budget Director Arthur Vietro and First Deputy Budget Director John Delaney for their availability and the information they have provided to us. We also thank the Board of Legislators for their consideration of our concerns and suggestions.

State League Study of National Popular Vote Halted

At the state convention in May 2007, delegates voted to accept a study entitled: "Should New York State Join the Compact for a National Popular Vote?". In November, the LWVUS advised the LWVNYS that they could not take action on any position the State league might adopt as a result of this study since the election of the president is a national issue. The recourse, however, presented by the LWVUS was to make an argument to "add to or subtract" from the LWVUS position regarding the selection of the President. In response to this, the LWVNYS board adopted the following motion: **LWVNYS Board has been directed by its membership to pursue the National Popular Vote study. Therefore, the Board agrees to direct Lori Dawson and Carol Mellor, [the committee co-chairs], to lobby across the country to recommend the adoption at the National convention in 2008 of a National Study entitled " Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact among the States as a Method for Electing the President"**.

Leagues are encouraged to recommend this study when returning their Program Planning Report Forms to LWVUS. (LWVS has already done so). Objective reference material about the original study can be found on the State League website (www.lwvnny.org).

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*Off-board, non-voting



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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THEY REPRESENT YOU 2007
Changes effective July 2007
VILLAGE OF SCARSDALE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Noreen Fisher, Mayor (CP)
term ends Apr. 2009
David Buchen (CP)
2nd term ends Apr. 2008
Miriam Levitt Flisser (CP)
1st term ends Apr. 2009
Dan Hochvert (CP)
1st term ends Apr. 2008
David Irwin (CP)
1st term ends Apr. 2009
Sharon Lindsay (CP)
1st term ends Apr. 2008
Kenneth Rilander (CP)
2nd term ends Apr. 2009

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jeffrey Blatt, President
2nd term ends June 2010
Marc Carter
2nd term ends June 2009
Linda Chayes, V.P.
1st term ends June 2008
Elizabeth Guggenheimer
1st term ends June 2010
Barbara Kemp
1st term ends June 2008
Jill Spieler
1st term ends June 2010
David Yaspan
1st term ends June 2009